

The Muriks.

These people are an increasing tribe living about 40 miles above the Government Station at Claudetown on the main Baram River.

They appear to be an extraordinary conglomeration of Kenyah, Kalabit and Kayan. According to their own history they originally came from the Bahau River in Dutch Borneo, and were probably part of the original Kelamantan inhabitants of that district, but were driven inland by the Kenyah tribes, Leppu Maut, Leppu Keh, etc. They then moved over into the Balong River, a tributary of the Ulu Baram, and gradually came further down-river to Long Semiang, where they came in touch with the Kayans, who were pushing over into Baram from the Batang Kayan. They made a close connection with the Kayans, which led to the introduction of a lot of Kayan words into their language. After being nearly exterminated by the great epidemic of small-pox in about 1875, they moved into the Selaan River amongst the Kayans, where they were attacked with great slaughter by the Leppu Teppus from the Batang Kayan, and those who escaped settled at their present village at Long Tamalla. They claim close relationship with such Kenyah Kelamantans as the Long Akar, Long Sibatu and Long Ulai tribes, and most of their customs are similar to this division of the Kelamantan race. Their religion consists of a belief in the usual numerous deities of the Kenyah mythology reigned over by the supreme god, Bali Peselong. These deities live in a separate heaven from that to which the souls of mortals go and the locality of it is unknown,——probably in the sky.

Long Kendi is the name of the heaven to which the souls of mankind go, and all go there with the exception of those who have been killed in warfare, and of women who have died in childbirth. Long Kendi is ruled by Iju Ipoi, a semi-deity, and no work is done there; the paddy grows of its own accord and every-

thing is bliss; and with the exception of the two modes of death mentioned above, no special moral qualities seem to be demanded to obtain entrance thereto. On the road to Long Kendi a guardian spirit is stationed, named Ilah Buhan, who turns the illigible down a rocky path which leads to the country of Pohun Nang, ruled by Lawai Lingan, where there is always war and famine, so that these restless spirits can indulge themselves to their hearts' content. It is curious that a people who have indulged in fighting and headhunting to such an extent should apportion the inferior future life to those who die on the field of battle.

The knowledge of this future life was obtained from one Uku Pandah, whose spirit departed from him two years before his allotted span of life was finished. This spirit obtained admittance into Long Kendi in the shape of a pig, but was immediately recognised by Iju Ipoi, who ordered him to return to his mortal body for the remainder of his term of life. This the spirit did, and to the astonishment of everybody, Uku Pandah, having been dead for two days, suddenly came to life again, and at the end of two years expired again, this time however to return no more. They have no idea of the creation and only know that there were two original beings, one male and one female, who had a large family, the youngest of which became the chief.

In their mourning customs they follow the Kalabits and the ceremonies of 'Nulang' ends a term of mourning, but they do not actually 'nulang', that is remove the bones of the deceased from the coffin and place them in jars as the Kalabits and other Kelamantans do. However if there has been a lot of sickness and many deaths, they very often indulge in the Kayan custom of 'aio' instead, that is they take an old head down from the house and go through the ceremonies of returning from the warpath.

The Muriks are a very hard working people and are some of the best farmers in the District. They do not seem to have any special time for farming, but having obtained their omens start felling the jungle a couple of months after they have finished harvesting. This is

probably a remnant of their former customs, when they irrigated their farms like the Kalabits do, and therefore took no account of the seasons. Their omens for farming are the *ukang*¹, *keheng*², *pajan*³, and *nipa liar*⁴. When they start sowing the paddy they have a 'lemalli' or 'tabu' for about ten days to allow each man to have sown his farm for at least one a day. During this time no strangers are allowed up into the house. When they commence harvesting another 'lemalli' of seven days takes place. For the first three days of this no one stirs out of the house, no work is done and no sexual intercourse is allowed. An old woman well versed in the details of the custom is chosen, and she taking some paddy of the preceding year and mixing it with a little of the new seed, husks it and then eats it. After the third day everybody starts cutting the paddy, while food and drink offerings are made to the gods, Laieng Linaai, Bali Parei (the spirit of the paddy) and Asong Wan, Bali Oman (the spirit of the year). These customs are closely allied with those of the Kalabits.

Their nomenclature is distinctly Kenyah, but as stated before, their language contains a large proportion of Káyan words, some Kalabit and some words entirely distinct, such as *parei*, rice, *mendah*, many, and *pelulup*, to speak.

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1.—*Ukang* = the Dayak *Katupong*, the Little yellow-fronted Wood-pecker (*Sasia abnormis*, Temm.).

2.—*Keheng* is a small king-fisher.

3.—*Pajan* = the Dayak *pangkas*, the Plum-coloured Wood-pecker (*Pyrrhopicus porphyromelas*, Boie).

4.—*Nipa liar* = the Dayak *kenawang*, a cobra (*Bungarus flaviceps*, Reinh.).

Tribal names on the Limbang River.

Some recent inquiries have elicited the following information on the origin and meaning of certain tribal names of this district, *i. e.*, as interpreted by the natives.

Kadayan is supposed to be derived from the Brunei-Malay words *kena gadai* meaning *to suffer slavery*, or